F
74
.C2E5

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. F74

Shelf .C2E5

PRESENTED BY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

JULY 4, 1876.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION,

AT

CANTON, MASS.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS,

BY

HON. CHARLES ENDICOTT.

BOSTON:
WILLIAM BENSE, PRINTER, 35 CONGRESS STREET.
1876.

JULY 4, 1876.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION,

AT

CANTON, MASS.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS,

BY

HON. CHARLES ENDICOTT.

BOSTON:
WILLIAM BENSE, PRINTER, 35 CONGRESS STREET,
1876.

[Public Resolutions, No. 1.]

Joint Resolution on the Celebration of the Centennial in the several counties or towns.

Be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That it be, and is hereby recommended by the Senate and House of Representatives, to the people of the several States, that they assemble in their several counties or towns on the approaching Centennial Anniversary of our National Independence, and that they cause to have delivered on such day an historical sketch of said county or town from its formation, and that a copy of said sketch may be filed, in print or manuscript, in the clerk's office of said county, and an additional copy, in print or manuscript, be filed in the office of the Librarian of Congress, to the intent that a complete record may be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first Centennial of their existence.

Approved, March 13, 1876.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

House of Representatives,
April 27, 1876.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Commonwealth transmit to the clerks of the several cities and towns in the Commonwealth a copy of the joint Resolution of Congress on the celebration of the Centennial, in the several counties or towns, transmitted to the Senate by his Excellency the Governor, April 24, 1876.

Geo. A. Marden, *Clerk.*

Concurred.

Senate, April 28, 1876.
S. N. Gifford, *Clerk.*

Sketch of the Celebration.

In accordance with the foregoing recommendation, a public meeting was held in Massapoag Hall, on the seventh day of June, 1876, to take into consideration the subject of a Centennial Address and Celebration in Canton, on the fourth of July following. The meeting was fully attended, and the object for which it was called met the hearty approval of the citizens of the town generally. Another meeting was held at the same place a week later, and the following committees were chosen to make the necessary arrangements for the proposed celebration.

General Committee. J. Mason Everett, Elijah A. Morse, Ezra S. Brewster, Samuel H. Capen, Arthur C. Kollock, David T. Hagan, Thomas E. Grover, W. Henry Bense, and Frank L. Gates.

Finance. Ezra S. Brewster, George F. Sumner, Joseph W. C. Seavey, Andrew A. Harrington, William B. Revere, William F. Colby, and William E. Lonergan.

Historical Address and Invitations. Arthur C. Kollock, Joseph W. C. Seavey, Robert Draper, Daniel T. V. Huntoon, Thomas E. Grover, J. Mason Everett, and George F. Sumner.

Music. George F. H. Horton, Edward R. Hixon, Larra E. Wentworth, Joseph W. C. Seavey, and Andrew Lopez, Jr.

Fireworks. Richard Howard, Larra E. Wentworth, Samuel H. Capen, Nathaniel Bent, Edgar H. Deane, William H. Little, and W. Henry Bense.

A Committee of Ladies, consisting of Mrs. Frank M. Ames, Mrs. Arthur C. Kollock, Mrs. Emma P. Capen, and Miss Georgie

A. Shepard, was also appointed, who organized the choir, and had charge of the music at the church.

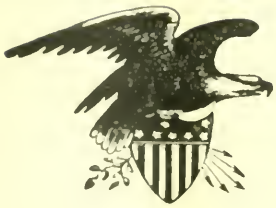
The celebration begun on the morning of the "Fourth" with a procession of "Antiques and Horribles," under the command of Mr. John S. Wattles, chief marshal.

The commemorative services were held in the meeting house of the First Congregational Parish, at two o'clock in the afternoon. The church had been generously offered for that purpose by the Society worshipping there, and its interior was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Thomas E. Grover, Esq. acted as President of the Day.

The Canton Brass Band, Walter Ames, leader, furnished music for the exercises of the morning and evening.

The celebration closed with fire-works on "Orthodox Hill," and bonfires on the summits of Billings Hill and Blue Hill.

The following is a copy of the Order of Exercises at the church.

1776.  1876.

Centennial Celebration

IN THE

Meeting House of the First Congregational Parish,

Canton, Mass., July 4, 1876.

Order of Exercises.

1. Organ Voluntary, — Miss Clara B. Lopez.
2. Reading from the Scriptures, — Rev. John W. Savage.
3. Prayer, — Rev. William H. Savary.
4. Chorus,—*Centennial Hymn*,—*J. K. Paine.*
5. Introductory Address, — Thomas E. Grover, Esq.
6. Chorus,—"*To Thee, O Country!*"—*Julius Eichberg.*
7. Reading of the Declaration of Independence. — Miss J. Annie Bense.
8. Chorus,—*American Hymn*,—*Keller.*
9. Historical Address, — Hon. Charles Endicott.
10. Chorus,—"*The Star Spangled Banner.*"
11. Addresses by Citizens.
12. Hymn,—"*America.*"

THE AUDIENCE ARE REQUESTED TO JOIN IN SINGING THIS HYMN.

My country, 't is of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain's side
Let freedom ring.

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills,
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our Father's God, to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's holy light,
Protect us with thy might,
Great God, our King!

13. Benediction, — Rev. Clifton Fletcher.

Introductory Address,

BY

THOMAS E. GROVER, ESQ.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

One hundred years ago to-day the old bell in Independence Hall rung out the glad tidings that a new nation had been born. Dependent colonies then became independent States: scattered communities were united and became a nation. Standing, as we now do, at the threshold of the second century of national existence, it is not only proper, but it is our duty, to honor the occasion by worthy and appropriate exercises. In the century past, we find much to excite our pride and admiration, mingled with some things we would gladly forget. I will not tire you by recounting our virtues, nor will I disturb you by dwelling upon our misfortunes. We rejoice that a whole country can unite with one accord in remembrance of the event we have here met to commemorate; we rejoice that each day is carrying us farther from the burning passions and bitter griefs growing out of the late conflict, and that the soothing hand of time is mellowing into tenderness the memories it has left us. We have no desire to turn back the seasons, and to live over again those years so heavy with dread anticipations of the future. To-day we have gathered for the more pleasing task of recounting the achievements of those patriotic men who, a century ago, were engaged in the great contest with the mother country. We, who dwell in Massachusetts, have particular reasons for joining in this celebration.

It is not claiming too much for our grand old Commonwealth to say that, to her, more than to any other, is this country indebted for its free institutions, its republican form of government, and whatever of liberty these secure. She bore more than her share in the revolutionary struggle ending in our independence, and no characters in history stand out more boldly and grandly than her leaders in those perilous times. The men who, at the beginning, formed the councils, and directed the destiny of this nation, were not common men. Measure them by any human standard and you cannot find their superiors. In all their acts they seemed led by an enlightened and intelligent patriotism, which raised them above prejudice, or passion. Their devotion to their native land was founded in great principles, and supported by great virtues,—qualities that only the noblest characters can claim. We may justly boast of our progress, of our wealth, and of our material prosperity, but after all, their example is to-day our richest inheritance, and most priceless possession. Here, under their guiding hands, was first established that consummate form of government which, carried out as it never had been before, secured freedom to a whole people. It was the application of a principle to practical government that till then had been considered only as the idle vision of dreamers, and which found its expression in the Declaration of Independence, "that noble instrument," a late historian observes, "that should be hung up in the nursery of every king and blazoned on the walls of every royal palace." The liberty they gained for themselves and for their descendants, did not, however, arise from the excitement of the hour. It was the slow growth of ages, brought hither from other lands, but planted here under a free sky, and in a noble soil, it produced a bountiful harvest, which, in good time let us trust, will yet develop into more perfect ripeness.

To-day the past and the future part at the door of the new century. The past is secure, the future depends upon the ability of this and coming generations to maintain the strict integrity, and practice the stern virtues of the founders of the Republic. Let not their example be forgotten, lest the lesson it teaches should also perish.

ORATION,

BY

Hon. CHARLES ENDICOTT.

Fellow Citizens:

On this Centennial Anniversary of our National Independence, at the invitation of your Committee, I am to speak to you for an hour touching the territory which we inhabit, and the action of the municipalities with which it has been connected for an hundred years.

The National Congress, by a joint Resolution passed on the 13th of March last, recommended to the people of the several States that they assemble in their counties and towns on the approaching anniversary, and that they cause to have delivered on such day an historical sketch of said county or town, to the intent that complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first century of their existence.

The ancient town of Dorchester was settled in the year 1630, and comprised, substantially, the comparatively small territory lying between the Neponset River and the town of Boston and the Bay. The date of its incorporation is given as Sept. 7, 1630,

because, on that day, the Court Record has this entry: "It is ordered that Trimountaine shalbe called Boston; Mattapan, Dorchester; & the towne vpon Charles Ryver, Waterton." This vote was the Act of Incorporation. In 1636 the Court granted to Dorchester the territory south of the Neponset to the top of the Blue Hills, being substantially that territory, which, in 1662, was incorporated as the town of Milton.

In 1637, an extensive grant, subsequently called the "New Grant," was made to Dorchester by the Court, comprising all the territory, not before granted, lying between Dedham and the Plymouth or Old Colony line, which included the present territory of Canton, Stoughton, Sharon, the larger part of Foxborough, and a portion of Wrentham,—extending, very nearly, to the Rhode Island line. This large extent of territory, was then, of course, but a wilderness, and is repeatedly referred to in the General Court Records, as "lying beyond the Blue Hills."

Prior to and after the settlement of Dorchester, the Neponset Indians, as the Punkapoag Indians were then usually called, had their habitation in Dorchester and its vicinity. There they hunted in the forests and took their fish from the rivers and the Bay.

The inhabitants of Dorchester having early purchased of the indians their title to the lands, were doubtless anxious that the tribe should be further removed from their midst. In 1657, at the solicitation of Eliot, the town granted to these indians 6000 acres at Punkapoag, and about that time they were removed hither.

The Grant was located by Major Atherton and Lieut. Clap; the lines of the location were delineated on Butcher's Plan, made in 1696, and were also placed upon the county map, some years since, through the instrumentality of our townsman, Mr. Ellis Ames.

This indian land was disposed of, from time to time, to the English settlers by the Indians, or by the guardians of the tribe, under the authority of the General Court, until about the year 1829, when the last of it was sold.

There is much interesting history connected with this Indian territory but I have not the time to develop it.

In 1724, a portion of the New Grant was set off to Wrentham, and on the 22d December 1726, the town of Stoughton was incorporated, and the present towns of Stoughton, Canton, Sharon and a part of Foxboro', were included within its limits. Dorchester interposed no objection to the act of incorporation, for when the question came before that town to see whether they would agree to its being set off the vote was thirty-four in favor and twenty-nine against it.

On June 20, 1765, Stoughtonham was incorporated as a District, and continued such until, by a General Act, passed August 23, 1775, that, and all other Districts of like character, were invested with all the powers and privileges of towns. By Special Act, Feb. 25, 1783, Stoughtonham took the name of Sharon.

Of the internal history of Stoughton, from its incorporation in 1726, down to the year 1773, I propose to say but little. This part of the town, now Canton, constituted the First Precinct, or Parish, and that part, now Stoughton, after the incorporation of Stoughtonham as a District, constituted the Second Precinct.

We may assume that the inhabitants of the different Precincts lived harmoniously together under one town government, increasing in population and wealth, — maintaining their churches and schools, and educating themselves and their children in these, as well as in the town meeting, the militia and the General Court, not only for the ordinary duties of life, but also for those of local government, and the more stern realities of the Revolutionary Crisis.

Here, within a mile of this spot, Roger Sherman, whose name is appended to the Declaration of Independence, which has been read in our hearing, and who was one of the Committee that reported it to the Congress, passed the days of his boyhood and youth, even if not born here upon our own territory, which is a matter of some doubt and uncertainty.

For a series of years preceding the Declaration of Independence, the action of the British Ministry and Parliament, on the subjects of taxation, trade and labor, had been such as to exasperate the Colonies and doubtless led many thinking minds to reflect upon

the value to the Colonies of their connection with the mother country, and the absurdity of remaining in subjection under the many grievances imposed upon them.

That a people like ours, numbering two and a half millions, with an extensive territory and ample room for expansion, could long remain subject to a foreign government that oppressed and held them down is utterly inconceivable.

Sabine, scouts the idea that the stamp duty and the tea duty were the causes of the American Revolution. "Colonies" says he, "become nations as certainly as boys become men, and by a similar law." "The Declaration of the fifty-six at Philadelphia, was but the contract signed by the forty-one sad and stricken ones in the waters of Provincetown, with the growth of one hundred and fifty-six years." "At most, taxation and the kindred questions, did but *accelerate* the dismemberment of the British Empire, just as a man whose lungs are half consumed hastens the crisis by suicide."

For years prior to 1776, Samuel Adams, the great leader of Revolutionary sentiment, had labored with all his powers to instil into the minds of the people republican ideas. He was unreservedly for separation and independence, which he had avowed as early as 1769,—and which he wished to have declared immediately after the Battle of Lexington. He foresaw that sooner or later it must come, and to his view apparently, the sooner the better.

"Taxation," and "Taxation without Representation" were the watchwords, to some considerable extent. But it was not simply the paltry taxes that were levied upon the Colonies that led to independence. These words were but the terms used to signify a certain class of legislative acts that were especially aimed at the industrial and maritime interests of the Colonies. *Sabine* tells us, "there were no less than twenty-nine laws which restricted and bound down Colonial industry" "hardly one of which, until the passage of the Stamp Act imposed a direct tax." "They forbade the use of water-falls, the erecting of machinery, of looms and spindles, and the working of wood and iron; they set the king's

arrows upon trees that rotted in the forests." It was not, as I have said, so much "direct taxation" as it was this restrictive policy and legislation, the end and purpose of which was, to keep the Colonies as mere tributaries and market places for the trade and manufactures of the mother country, and to prevent our merchants from carrying on trade with any nation, other than Great Britain.

The Colonies hesitated long before proceeding to active resistance, but having once entered upon it, the path of duty became plain and they persevered until success crowned their efforts.

Our local history as connected with the Revolutionary Struggle must be drawn largely from the records of the town of Stoughton, of which Canton was then a part. From these records I shall quote freely, as being the most satisfactory mode of showing the progress of events.

I propose to commence with the early spring of 1773. At this time the Boston Committee of Correspondence, at the head of which was Samuel Adams, addressed a letter to the town, and a meeting was called to consider it. The record proceeds as follows: —

"At a Town Meeting, legally assembled in Stoughton on Monday y^e 1^st day of March, A. D. 1773.

Mr. Joseph Billings, *Moderator.*

Voted to hear the Letter sent from the Town of Boston: and after some debates, the following Letter was read:

"*To the Boston Committee of Correspondence:*

Honored Gentlemen:

Having had opportunity to hear and consider your Letter to us: for which we are obliged and Thankful to you: We, according to our best understanding, think that our rights as Men, as Christians and British subjects are rightly stated by you and in the many instances produced have been greatly infringed upon and Violated by Arbitrary Will and Power. We esteem them heavy grievances, and apprehensive that in future time they may prove fatal to us and our Posterity, as to all that is dear to us,

Reducing us not only to Poverty but Slavery, We do Humbly Remonstrate against them and concur with you and our Brethren in several Towns of the Province, tho' we cannot Joyn with all the Towns, nor with you in every circumstance and Particular of your Proceeding, Yet we must concur with you and them in Bearing our Testimony against them and in uniting in all Constitutional methods for regaining these Rights and Privileges that have been ravished from us and for retaining those that yet Remain to us and accordingly we advise and Instruct our Representative to exert himself for these ends. And as that this Province ever had, and (ought) to have a right to Petition to the King for the Redress of such grievances as they feel and for Preventing such as they have just Reason to apprehend and fear, that he move that an Humble Petition for these Purposes be Presented to His Majesty, Hoping for a Divine Blessing upon all our Constitutional Endeavours for the Preservation and Enjoyment of all our natural and Constitutional Rights and Privileges, and Professing our Loyalty to the King and Praying that he may Long sit upon the throne and Rule in Righteousness, and that he may be a nursing father to us his Loyal Subjects and all his officers may be peace and his exactions Righteousness, We subscribe ourselves your distressed Brethren and oppressed fellow subjects."

"*Voted* to accept of this Letter and that it be Recorded upon the Town Book, and a copy be sent by the Town Clerk to the Committee of Correspondence in Boston."

It will be seen that at this time the town was extremely cautious about committing itself to the views and purposes of the Boston Committee: — they agreed fully in the statement of grievances, but prefered to continue their petitions to the King. This caution is still further exhibited by the action of the Town Meeting held on July 11, 1774, when it was

"*Voted* to dismiss the 2[d] Article, viz: — To see if the Town will vote to pay £2. 17. 9. to the Hon[ble] Thomas Cushing, Esq[e.] of Boston, by y[e] 15[th] day of August next, to pay y[e] Committee of this Province chosen by our General Court to meet y[e] Committee of other governments."

It is evident, however, that there were active friends of resistance in Stoughton, and that they were not idle; nor were they long delayed in bringing the town to their way of thinking.

A little more than a month from the date of the preceding meeting, to wit: on the 16th of August, as Bancroft informs us, "a county congress," of the towns of Suffolk, (which then embraced what is now Norfolk), met at a tavern in the village of Stoughton. This tavern, one of our own historians, Mr. Huntoon, informs us, was the "Doty Tavern," a building now standing a little to the south of the base of Blue Hill. At this meeting Joseph Warren was present. "As the aged Samuel Dunbar, the rigid Calvinist Minister," of the first parish, continues Bancroft, "breathed forth among them his prayer for liberty, the venerable man seemed inspired with "the most divine and prophetical enthusiasm." "We must stand undisguised upon one side or the other," said Ebenezer Thayer of Braintree."

I do not find that the Stoughton men who may have attended this meeting at Doty's tavern were chosen thereto by any action of the town: so far as our own citizens were concerned, it was an individual matter. It is said, however, by Bancroft, "that the members were unanimous and firm; but that "they postponed their decision till it could be promulgated with greater formality," and, so far as this town was concerned, it may be added, with greater authority. To this end, and in contempt of Gage and the Act of Parliament, they directed special meetings in every town and precinct in the county, to elect delegates with full powers, to appear at Dedham on the first Monday in September.

On the 29th day of August another town meeting was held. The meeting at Doty's tavern had had its effect; the appearance there of the aged minister Dunbar, probably had created enthusiasm among the people,—given courage to the timid and hope to all. William Royal was chosen Moderator, and it was —

"*Voted* that a Committee be chosen to represent y^e^ Town in a County Convention of y^e^ Towns and Districts of this County to be holden at the house of Richard Woodward at Dedham on Tuesday y^e^ 6th day of September next, with full power of adjourn-

ing, acting and doing all such matters and things in said Convention, or in a general Convention of the Countys of this Province as to them may appear of Public Utility in this day of Public and General Distress." "*Voted* that five persons be chosen for this Purpose, and also that John Withington, Theophilus Curtis, John Kenney, Jedediah Southworth and Josiah Pratt be this Committee."

"That this Committee be directed to endeavor to obtain a County Indemnification for all such persons as may be fined or otherwise suffer by a non-compliance with a Late Act of y^e^ British Parliament, intitled "An Act for the better regulation of the Government of the Massachusetts Bay in North America."

"That this Committee be also a Committee of Correspondence to advise and correspond with the other Towns in this Province about all such matters and things as may appear to them likely in any way to affect the Public.

On the 6th of September 1774, the County Convention assembled at the house af Mr. Woodward in Dedham; every town and district in the County was represented. Their business was referred to a committee, of which Joseph Warren was chairman.

The Convention was adjourned to meet on Friday the 9th, Sept. at the house of Daniel Vose, in Milton, when Warren presented the Resolutions, with an elaborate report introductory thereto, from which I extract two lines, in these words: "On the fortitude, on the wisdom, and on the exertions of this important day, is suspended the fate of this new world and of unborn millions."

The Address and Resolutions, since known as the "Suffolk Resolves" were unanimously adopted.

And it was "*Voted*, That Joseph Warren, Esq. and Doct. Benjamin Church of Boston, Deacon Joseph Palmer and Col. Ebenezer Thayer of Braintree, Capt. Lemuel Robinson, William Holden, Esq. and Capt. John Homans of Dorchester, Capt. William Heath of Roxbury, Col. William Taylor and Doct. Samuel Gardner of Milton, Isaac Gardner, Esq., Capt. Benjamin White, and Capt. Thomas Aspinwall of Brookline, Nathaniel Sumner, Esq., and Mr. Richard Woodward of Dedham, be a Committee to wait on his Excellency Gov^r^ Gage and inform him that this

County is alarmed at the fortifications making on Boston Neck, and to remonstrate against the same."

The Committee on the next day prepared an address "To His Excellency, Thomas Gage, Esq., Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Province of Massachusetts Bay," and presented the same to Gage, on Monday the 12th.

To this address the Governor replied on the same day; after which, the Committee met together and adopted an answer to the Governor, of which a copy was delivered to Secretary Flucker by Joseph Warren, with a desire that he would present it to the Governor, and request His Excellency to appoint a time for receiving it in form, which, as the Committee were informed, the Governor declined.

These Resolves attracted great attention. They were sent by special messengers to our delegates in the Continental Congress, delighting Sam. Adams and John Adams, and creating great excitement in the Continental Congress, where they were read. Joseph Galloway, a loyalist, at one time a member of the Continental Congress, in his "Historical and Political Reflections of the Rise and Progress of the American Revolution, London, 1780," said, these "Suffolk Resolves" "contained a complete declaration of war against Great Britain."

On the 26th day of September, at a Town meeting held in the first precinct, (in the meeting house which stood within twenty rods of this spot,) the town, together with the district of Stoughtonham, made choice of Mr. Thomas Crane for their representative, and voted him the following instructions:

"Sir,—As we have now chosen you to Represent us in the Great and General Court to be holden at Salem on Wednesday y^e 5^th day of October next ensuing, We do hereby Instruct you that in all your doings as a member of the House of Representatives you adhere firmly to the charter of this Province, granted by their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, and that you do no act that can possibly be construed into an acknowledgment of the validity of y act of y British Parliament for altering y^e Government of Massachusetts-Bay. More especially that you ac-

knowledge y^e^ Honourable Board of Counsellors elected by y^e^ General Court at their session in May last as y^e^ only rightful and Constitutional Counsel of this Province; and as we have reason to believe that a Conscientious Discharge of your duty will Produce your Disolution as an House of Representatives, We do hereby Impower and Instruct you to join with y^e^ members who may be sent from this and y^e^ other Towns in y^e^ Province, and to meet with them at a time to be agreed upon in a General Provincial Congress to act upon such matters as may come before you, in such a manner as may appear to you most conducive to y^e^ true Interest of this Town and Province and most likely to Preserve the Liberties of all North America."

On the same day the town made choice of Mr. John Withington to meet the Committee from y^e^ several Towns in this Province, at Concord, the second Tuesday in October next, in a General Provincial Congress, to act upon such matters as may come before you in such a manner as may appear to you most conducive to the true Interest of this Town and Province and most likely to Preserve the Liberties of all North America.

1775, January 9. The town made choice of Mr. Thomas Crane, to Represent them in a Provincial Congress to be held at Cambridge, the first day of February next.

At the same meeting it was put to vote whether the town would send their Province money to Henry Gardner, Esq., and it passed in the negative.

Gardner had been elected Province Treasurer by the Provincial Congress.

This money consisted of tax money, collected by the constables for the province, and the proposition really was to divert it from the use of his majesty's officers and treasury and use it for the purpose of resisting the encroachments of the Crown.

How this vote could have been carried in the negative after what had already taken place it is a little difficult to conceive; however that may have been, at an adjourned meeting held a week later, the vote was reconsidered and it was "voted to send all our Province money to Henry Gardner, Esq., of Stow, as is recom-

mended by y Provincial Congress." It was further "*Voted* to indemnify the constables for not carrying the Province money to Harrison Gray, Esq." who was the treasurer of the crown.

On the same day, the Continental Congress and their Resolves were fully approved, and a Committee of Inspection chosen, consisting of nineteen persons, viz:—

John Withington, John Kenney, Adam Blackman, James Endicott, Jeremiah Ingraham, Abner Crane, Peter Talbot, Jonathan Capen, Robert Capen, Jedediah Southworth, Samuel Shepard, David Vinton, Theophilus Curtis, Josiah Pratt, Eleazer Robins, Samuel Tucker, Benj Gill, Robert Swan, and Peter Gay.

This Committee was instructed to use its interest that the Resolves and the Association of the Continental Congress be closely adhered to.

Matters now looked warlike, for on March 6th, 1775, the Town "Voted to raise one quarter of the Militia as Minute men agreeable to the advice of y Provincial Congress," "and to give them one shilling for half a day's training, for two half days every week." The field officers with the Selectmen were directed to raise the men.

March 20. The Town "Voted that Mr. Thomas Crane attend the County Congress at Mr. Daniel Vose's in Milton, y 26th day of April next."

It will be remembered that it was at the house of Mr. Vose that the Suffolk Resolves were adopted on September 9th, 1774.

Whether the meeting at Mr. Vose's was held on the 26th I am not informed, very likely not, for, before that time, important events were to happen. The 19th of April was fast approaching. Gage had determined to cripple the country towns by destroying the colony stores at Concord, and secretly prepared an Expedition for that purpose,—a force of eight hundred grenadiers and infantry crossed in boats from the foot of the common to East Cambridge. The activity of Warren and Paul Revere discovered the purpose of Gage, and arrangements were made by which Concord and the Middlesex towns should be notified. Paul Revere's famous midnight ride on the 18th of April, aroused the people of

Medford, Lexington and Concord, and it almost seems as if the clatter of his horse's hoofs were heard here in Stoughton, for on the nineteenth nine companies of militia marched from Stoughton and the district of Stoughtonham, to the assistance of their brethren, viz:—

Capt. James Endicott's Company,	.....	83 men.
" William Briggs' "	.....	41 "
" Asahel Smith's "	.....	77 "
" Peter Talbot's "	.....	85 "
" Josiah Pratt's "	.....	33 "
" Israel Smith's "	.....	23 "
" Samuel Payson's "	.....	33 "
" Edward Bridge Savels' Co.,	.....	64 "
" Ebenezer Tisdale's "	.....	31 "

Making in all four hundred and seventy men who marched from Stoughton and Stoughtonham on that eventful day.

On the 27th of April, Capt. William Bent's company, fifty-nine men, marched to Roxbury for three months and twelve days' service.

In June, Capt. Frederick Pope enlisted a company of fifty-eight men, for one month and nine days' service.

Capt. Endicott, on the 4th of March, 1776, marched with his company of forty-one men "to the assistance of the Continental Troops, when they fortified on the heights of Dorchester." A little later in the same year, with eighty-two men, he marched to Ticonderoga, and on the 28th March, 1778, to Roxbury, "agreeable to an Order of Council," with seventy-eight men.

On the 22d March, 1776, Capt. Theophilus Lyon's Company, forty-seven men, marched to Braintree,—and on March 1, 1778, Capt. Lyon, with forty-nine men, marched to Castle Island.

Capt. Rob't Swan, with sixty-two men, marched to Bristol, R. I., and with thirty men, to the Castle, on Dec. 19, 1777.

Capt. Abner Crane, with fifty-eight men, in 1779, marched with his company "in a campaign to Claverack on the Hudson River."

The promptness with which the militia met every call was most creditable. Nor was the town less prompt in furnishing its quota to the continental army. For this, the town furnished nearly or quite two hundred men, for terms of service varying from six months to three years, or during the war. Some of our men having served for the full period of four years.

May 25, Thomas Crane was chosen to represent the town in the Provincial Congress, for the six months following, and Peter Talbot, Christopher Wadsworth, and Benj^{a} Gill were appointed a Committee of Correspondence.

On July 10th, Stoughton and Stoughtonham, in town meeting assembled, elected Thomas Crane to represent them in a great and General Court, to be held in Watertown, on Wednesday, the 19th day of July, 1775.

Very little action of importance in town meeting, was transacted during the remainder of the year 1775.

We come now to the year 1776. On March 18th, Messrs. Elijah Dunbar, Peter Talbot, Josiah Pratt, Theophilus Curtis, John Kenney, Christopher Wadsworth, and David Lyon were chosen a Committee of Correspondence and Inspection.

All of these men, except the chairman, had marched to the lines, to the music of fife and drum, on the 19th of April,—two of them, Talbot and Pratt, as captains, each in command of a company.

On May 22d, another town meeting was held, at which, we may well suppose, the men who had mustered and marched so promptly on the 19th of April, were present. An article in the warrant had informed them that the question of Independence was to be acted on by the meeting. The first business was the choice of Representatives, and Benjamin Gill and Thomas Crane were chosen.

You will bear in mind, my friends, that the date of this meeting was May 22, six weeks prior to the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, by the continental congress, and while the question there was trembling in the balance, our fathers passed this Resolve:

"*Voted*, That if the Honourable Continental Congress should, for the safety of this Colony, Declare us Independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain, We, the Inhabitants, will Solemnly engage with our lives and fortunes to support them in the Measure."

All honor to these men of seventeen hundred and seventy-six.

On the fourth of July, 1776, one hundred years ago to-day, the Declaration of Independence was adopted. I give the action of the Massachusetts Council, showing what measures were taken to give publicity to the document:

"*In Council, July 17th*, 1776.

"ORDERED, That the Declaration of Independence be printed, and a copy sent to the Minister of each Parish, of every Denomination within this State, and that they severally be required to read the same to their respective Congregations as soon as divine service is ended, in the afternoon, on the first Lord's Day after they shall have received it: And after such Publication thereof to deliver the said Declaration to the Clerks of their several Towns or Districts, who are hereby required to record the same in their respective Town or District Books, there to remain as a perpetual Memorial thereof.

In the Name and by Order of y^e^ Council.

R. DERBY, JR., *President.*

A true Copy, Attest, JOHN AVERY, *Dep. Sec'y.*"

And our Town Clerk adds, 'faithfully recorded.'

Attest, GEORGE CROSSMAN,
Town Clerk."

On July 18th, the town voted to raise, by taxation, a sum of money to give to each man to the number of thirty-eight men, that shall enlist into the service for the Northern Department, against Quebec, the sum of £6. 6s. 8d. as an addition to their bounty.

1777, May 21st. John Kenney was chosen as "agent of the town, to procure evidence against the 'toreys,' and a committee, consisting of John Kenney, Christopher Wadsworth, David Vin-

ton, Peter Talbot, Capt. Pratt, Capt. Endicott, and Benjamin Tucker, was chosen to see to the enforcement of the "Regulating Act."

May 28th. A committee chosen to examine the accounts of the town's committee of correspondence, etc., made report, which was accepted.

Some of the items of these accounts I give you, as showing the character of the work performed by the committee.

The account of Elijah Dunbar, Esq. contained, among others, these items:

"1776.

March 18th.	To ½ day writing circular letters,	£0	4.	5.
" 20th.	To ½ day at Johnson's about getting wood for the army,		2.	0.
May 13th.	To ½ day taking cognizance of those y^t^ have been unfriendly to y^e^ country,		1.	10½.
June 3rd,	To ½ day at Capt. Smith's to take some order with those who refused to sign the Test Act.		2.	0.
July 22 and 26,	To 2½ days at Johnson's about procuring hard money, etc.		4.	0.

1777.

Feb. 12 and 13,	To 2 days on y^e^ business of Regulating prices,		8.	0."

The full amount allowed Mr. Dunbar was, £2. 17. 6.

"Capt. Peter Talbot attended all the above said service, except the writing of notifications about regulating prices, and over and above y^e^ aforesaid account he attend^d^ y^e^ County Convention at Dedham and singley he went about ½ day to get the Test Act signed." Capt. Talbot's allowance was . . . . £2. 4. 1.

Capt. Christopher Wadsworth, attended substantially the same service that Capt. Talbot did,—and was allowed, £2. 4. 4.

Capt. Theophilus Curtis was allowed, ... £1. 3. 10½.

Capt. David Lyon, ... £2. 8. 0.

Capt. Josiah Pratt, ... £1. 10. 10½.

And John Kenney's is allowed . . . . . £3. 3. 8.

the same as Capt. P. Talbot, and over and above, for one journey to Gen[l] Washington, sent by the Selectmen."

On May 26th, the selectmen exhibited to the town meeting a list of those persons that, in their opinion, have endeavored since y[e] 19th of April, 1775, to counteract y[e] United Struggles of this and the United States, for the preservation of their Liberties and Privileges, as follows:—

William Curtis,	Edward Taylor,
Noah Kingsbury,	Henry Crane,
Samuel Capen,	Edward Shail.

The report is signed by Benj. Gill, Adam Blackman, Jonathan Capen, and James Endicott, Selectmen.

Some, if not all of these men must have joined the loyalist party but a short time prior to the presentation of this report, for both Edward Taylor and Edward Shail marched with Endicott's company on the 19th of April, and on two later occasions, in 1776, Shail's name appears upon the muster rolls.

1778. March 16th. The town voted to accept the Report of the committee chosen to make an average or Equal Balance of Duty, by fixing the pay for the different kinds of service, as follows:—

The eight months at the Lines in 1775, . .	£3.	0.	0.
The two months service at y[e] Lines in 1775, .	1.	4.	0.
The twelve months service in 1776, excepting the men that went with Capt. Pope, . . .	20.	0.	0.
The 12 months service with Capt. Pope in 1776,	15.	0.	0.
The 4 months service at Ticonderoga, in 1776, each man giving credit for bounty received, .	8.	0.	0.
The 4 mos. service at the Lines in 1776, . .	4.	0.	0.
The 2 " " at York in 1776, . .	6.	0.	0.
The 3 " " " " " 1776 & 1777, .	7.	0.	0.
The 3 " " " y[e] Lines in 1777, . .	2.	10.	0.
The 12 days service at Castle Island in 1777, .	0.	15.	0.
The 3 weeks service at Bristol, R. I. in 1777, .	2.	0.	0.
The 2 months " " North Kingston, R. I. in 1775,	5.	0.	0.

The 3 months service at Stillwater and other places, in 1777,				10.	0.	0.
The 4	"	"	" Rhode Island in 1777,	6.	0.	0.
The 1	"	"	" y Secret Expedition in 1777,	3.	0.	0.
The 5	"	"	to Gen. Burgoyne in 1777 & 1778,	7.	0.	0.
To 3	"	"	at Dorchester & Boston in 1778,	2.	10.	0.
" 3	"	"	in Rhode Island in 1778,	0.	0.	0.
" 3	"	"	at Noddle's Island & Hull in 1776,	2.	0.	0.

In this year the town began to be excited about a new form of government, for the State of Massachusetts, proposed by the General Court.

March 23d it was "*Voted* That Messrs. Elijah Dunbar, Peter Talbot, Wm. Wheeler, Jed[h] Southworth, John Kenny, Adam Blackman, Hezekiah Gay, Nath[l] Fisher, Samuel Shepard, Geo. Crossman, Isaiah Johnson, James Hawkes Lewis, and Samuel Talbot, be a committee to take under consideration the new form of government, and make report to the town."

April 7th. "*Voted* That Elijah Dunbar, Esq. and Capt. Jedediah Southworth, be a committee to meet in a county convention at Dedham, on the 28th day of this inst. to take into consideration y[e] new form of government."

And on May 18th. The committee of 13, app[d] 23[d] March, made an elaborate report against the proposed new form of government. And it was voted unanimously, to disapprove the same. 235 votes being given.

May 28th, Thomas Crane, Esq. was elected Representative, and the town voted him the following instructions:

"To Thomas Crane, Esq.

Sir.—The town of Stoughton having made choice of you to Represent them in a Great and General Court, y[e] ensuing year, it must be agreeable to you, (if you consider yourself the servant of y[e] town and accountable to them as you really are,) to know y[e] minds of your constituents, respecting y[e] important Duties of your Station, who have chosen you to act for their safety & happiness, as connected with y[e] whole & not for your own private emolument or separate interest, & therefore, y[e] Town think fit to

give you the following instructions: You are by no means to vote for any person belonging to y^e^ following orders of men to have a seat in y^e^ legislative Council, but use your Influence that they may be excluded, (viz,) the members of the Continental Congress and officers holding Commissions under them,—Judges of y^e^ Superior Courts of Common Pleas, Judges of the maritime Courts, —Judges of Probate, Registers of Probate, Sheriffs,—Members of the Board of War, & all Executive Officers who have a fixed annual stipend. As soon as y^e^ Two Branches of the Legislature are settled and properly organized, your primary object must be the Prosecution of the War with spirit and vigour, with a view to bring it to a speedy & honourable issue.

"For this purpose you are directed to exert yourself to have y^e^ Continental Army completed in the most expeditious manner, & see that negligent Towns and Delinquent officers are punished according to law in that case made and provided. And also, you are to vote for such large and speedy supplies as may appear to you necessary to enable y^e^ Commander-in-Chief of our armies to answer the expectations of his Country, that y^e^ war, if Possible, may be ended the ensuing campaign with Immortal Honour to himself & Permanent Glory and Security to y^e^ United States of America."

Lengthy additions were made to these instructions by the town, which may be found duly recorded in the Records. They were also published in the Continental Journal of June 18, 1778.

1779, June 1. "*Voted*, To give our Representative y^e^ same Instructions our Representative had y^e^ last year, Together with y^e^ following Instructions, (viz:)

"To Elijah Dunbar, Esq.—Sir: Whereas y^e^ Town of Stoughton thought proper to instruct their Representative y^e^ last year in matters that concerned the public weal,—and you being the Present Legislative Servant of this Town, & as such you have solicited instruction from your constituents for the guidance of your General conduct in that Capacity y^e^ ensuing year, Therefore, y^e^ Town think fit to Direct & Instruct you strictly to adhere, and in the most caucious manner observe & obey" . . . "y^e^ instructions

given to their Representative y^e last year," . . . "excepting these two Paragraphs in said Instructions which relate to the form of Government that was proposed to the consideration of the inhabitants of this State for approbation or Disapprobation, which paragraphs are now redundant, as we find by a resolve of the General Court, pass^d Feb^y 20^th 1779, that s^d form hath been Disapproved by a majority of y^e Inhabitants of said State,—And also, you are further directed and impowered by your constituents to vote for y^e calling a State Convention for the sole purpose of forming a New Constitution or Form of Government, provided it shall appear, on Examination, that a majority of y^e people present & voting at their respective Town meetings choose, at this time, to have a New Constitution or Form of Government made, and if such a Convention should be voted to be called, you are hereby instructed to exert your utmost endeavors that some mode may be adopted, whereby the inhabitants of this State, (as nearly as possible,) may be equally Represented in said Convention; and furthermore, you are enjoined ever to be watchful of the Rights & Liberties of the (people,) and whenever any Infringement shall be attempted on them: or you are apprehensive that their safety or Interest are in Danger, You are, like a faithful Sentinel, to give the alarm to your Constituents."

August 9. "The Town made choice of y^e Rev^d Mr. Jedediah Adams for our Delegate to sit in State Convention for y^e sole purpose of forming a New Constitution."

Paper money had now become so much reduced in value, that the town adopted a report of a committee, regulating the prices of certain articles. I give a sample of these prices, as established August 9, 1779.

"Cyder £6. per bbl. and for making, 18*s.* per bbl. *Pertators* and Turnips 18*s.* per bushel, & other sauce in proportion. For a common dinner 15*s.* other meals in proportion. For lodging 3*s.* per night. West India Toddy at 12*s.* per Bowl. New England do. 9*s.* per bowl. Horse keeping one Night on grass 18*s.* on Hay 15*s.* Beef 5*s.* per lb., Mutton, Veal & Lamb 4*s.* per lb., Butter, 11*s* per lb., New Milk Cheese 6*s.* per lb., New Milk 2*s.*

per Quart, English Hay, 36*s.* per Hundred. For Shoeing a Horse £4.—a yoke of Oxen £8."

A committee of twenty-one persons was selected to inform the Committee of Correspondence of any breaches of the Resolution respecting these prices.

1780. On May 24, Thomas Crane, Esq. was chosen Representative, and on Sept. 4th, the first Election for Governor took place agreeably to a Resolve of the State Convention, passed on the 16th day of June, and JOHN HANCOCK had fifty-three votes, the whole number thrown.

October 10th. Elijah Dunbar, Esq. and Thomas Crane were chosen Representatives; Thomas Crane was excused from serving, and Capt. James Endicott was elected. Capt. Endicott was excused from serving, and Mr. Christopher Wadsworth was chosen.

In 1781, April 2d, the vote for Governor was as follows:—

John Hancock had 47 votes.
James Bowdoin had 2 "

1783, May 16th. John Kenney was chosen representative, and sundry instructions were voted him, showing a violent state of public feeling in regard to the tories; and showing, also, the first recorded evidence that the war was ended. I make these extracts:

"2d. Whereas we have reason to believe that this year every effort will be made for the return to their possessions of that abandoned set of men, very justly described by the Laws of this Commonwealth, Conspirators and absentees, who voluntarily at the beginning of the war, not only deserted their country's cause, but have aided and assisted the Enemy with their counsels and money, and many of them with their personal services, most inhumanly murdering innocent women and children, therefore, we instruct you to attend the General Court constantly, and use your utmost exertions that they, and every one of them, be forever excluded and Barred from having Lot or portion amongst us. And that the Estates they formerly possessed and have justly forfeited, may be immediately sold, and the money arising therefrom be applied to the Discharge of our public debt; and that such of them as

have unwariedly crept in among us, may be immediately and forever removed out of this Commonwealth."

"4th. And, whereas the war is at an End, we earnestly recommend it to you to use your interest in the General Court that our army, both officers and privates, may be paid off as soon as possible, either in money or securities, according to the public engagements made to them when they entered the service. But on no account are you ever to give your voice or vote for the establishing of half-pay officers amongst us, or any thing that may be called an equivalent, but to use your utmost exertions against it."

On the thirtieth of November, 1782, the preliminary treaty of peace was signed by the Commissioners of the two countries, by which the Independence of the United States was acknowledged.

When the news was promulgated here, we may well believe there was great rejoicing. In 1783, a meeting was held in the old meeting house, at which the venerable Dunbar was present. His prayers at the Doty Tavern had been answered, and he was doubtless ready himself to depart hence, to be here no more forever. At that great meeting of gladness and joy, it is humiliating to reflect that religious intolerance should have prevented the attendance of the veteran GRIDLEY, whose services in the French War had been so valuable to his king, and in the early days of the revolution, so important to the Republic. I may add, however, that his neglected remains will soon be removed by careful hands to yonder cemetery, where a suitable spot has been voted by the town, and that a monument will be erected, with becoming ceremonies, to perpetuate his memory.

1787. May 7. Elijah Dunbar and Col. Frederick Pope were elected representatives.

The bitter feeling which existed in 1783, as shown by the instructions to representative Kenny, before quoted, appears to have subsided. I make these extracts from the vote of instructions to Messrs. Dunbar and Pope:

"These discriminating and disqualifying acts, which serve to

irritate the minds of the people, instead of promoting the desirable blessing of peace, your constituents wish to have repealed, together with all other laws that appear repugnant to the common good."

"You will inquire whether the liberty of the Press, so essential to the security of freedom in a State, has been in any manner violated or restrained in this Commonwealth, and if so, you will endeavour to have the violators impeached and future restraints prevented."

"That if the Tender Act should be continued, which, on account of the present scarcity of Cash, may be for the best, for a limited time, you will endeavor to have amended, so that property may be appraised at the same rate for the payment of a Creditor, as it would have been at the time when the particular Debt was contracted."

"In order that all the Inhabitants in the Commonwealth may have full employ, be beneficial to themselves and the Public: You will endeavor by every feasible and rational method, to encourage & promote *Ship Building*, *Whale and Cod Fishery*, Agriculture, and every necessary & useful manufacture that may be profitably carried on in the States: — & that large Duties be laid on all imported articles that might be thus manufactured in them; and also upon all articles of Luxury & Extravagance, and that moderate Duties be laid upon many articles of convenience, but none upon the real necessaries of life."

From 1783, for several years, the attention of the town was given to the division of Suffolk County, which the town heartily favored. Success finally crowned this enterprise, and Norfolk County was incorporated March 20, 1793.

The obstructions to the passage of fish up the Neponset, by the dams at Milton, were fruitful sources of contention and litigation, so that, at one time, serious trouble was imminent,—a party from Stoughton went to Milton to remove obstructions, when they were set upon by the employees of the mill owners and driven away. A special town meeting was called to take action thereon —a committee of fourteen members was chosen to join with the fish committee in getting the way through Leeds' dam, and another

committee of twenty members, as the vote expresses it, was chosen "to stir up the People to go down and assist in opening Leeds' dam, for the fish to go up;" but cooler counsels prevailed, and the parties contested their rights in the courts.

In 1794 a novel experiment was tried for supplying the town treasury, by voting that the person who should be chosen representative, should serve for 6s. 7d. per day, and if the General Court should fix the pay at a higher rate "y^e overplus is to be returned to the town." Col. Frederick Pope was chosen and accepted the condition prescribed. It is probable that the experiment proved not to be remunerative, for at the next election the subject was dismissed.

INCORPORATION OF CANTON.

In 1795, the Inhabitants of the First Parish met in legal meeting, held at the meeting house, on the ninth day of March, and voted on the 13th article, (which was to see if the Parish will petition the General Court to be set off as a separate town,) that Elijah Dunbar, Esq., Col. Nathan Crane, Mr. Joseph Bemis, Col. Benj. Gill, and Capt. Elijah Crane, be a committee to prepare a Petition for the Inhabitants to sign for a Division of the town. And further voted that Col. Gill, Capt. Elijah Crane, and Col. Nathan Crane be a committee to present the petition to the General Court.

A petition was accordingly prepared, signed by one hundred and forty-three inhabitants of the Parish, and is here given:—

PETITION.

To the Honourable Senate and House of Representatives of the Com'th of Mass^{tts} in General Court assembled:

The Petition of the Subscribers, Inhabitants of the first Parish in the Town of Stoughton, in the County of Norfolk in s^d Com^th humbly showeth that the local situation of said Town of

Stoughton is very singular, being near Eleven Miles in length & about four Miles in breadth, as may appear by a Plan thereof, and also that there is a large body of land laying upon and contiguous to the line between the North and South Parishes, which is and always will be incapable of any valuable improvement, which throws the bulk of the Inhabitants of said Parishes at a great distance from each other, which peculiar circumstance makes it always inconvenient & sometimes impracticable for the Inhabitants of either of said Parishes to attend Town Meeting as they have been usually held for some years last past, by reason of the great distance of way & sometimes impassable roads.—

Therefore, your Petitioners humbly pray that the lands within the said first Parish & the Inhabitants thereof, (except those persons and their property that wish to remain with the Town of Stoughton,) may be incorporated into a Distinct and separate Town. And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

Stoughton, Apr^{l} 17^{th,} 1795.

Elijah Dunbar.	Michael Shaller.	Thomas Allen.
Benj'n Gill.	Sam'l Strobridge.	Jarath'l Crane.
Nathan Crane.	Isaac Billing.	Silas Crane.
Elijah Crane.	Seth Strobridge.	Elijah Crane, 2d.
Joseph Bemis.	Archibill McKendry.	James Endicott.
Sam'l Capen, 2d.	Samuel Gooch.	George Jordan.
William McKendry.	Lem. Tant.	Luther May.
Ezekiel Fisher.	John Wentworth.	Henry Bailey.
David Hartwell.	Rodolpis Kinsley.	George Crossman.
Jno. Kenney, Jr.	Wm. Crane.	Joseph Chandler.
Charles Fenno.	James Reed.	Richard Wild.
Sam'l Wales.	Lemuel Davenport.	Benjamin Lyon.
Nath'l Hill.	Fisher Kingsbury.	Sam'l Morse.
Moses Baker.	Ebenezer Holmes.	John Capen, 2d.
Redmon Spurr.	Edward Downs.	Benj'n Wentworth.
Thomas French.	Samuel Canterbury.	Enoch Dickerman.

Ezekiel Johnson.
John Putler.
Abel Putler.
Ephraim Hunt.
David Talbot.
Nathaniel Pitt.
William Bent.
Nath'l Fisher.
John Kenney.
James H. Lewis.
Laban Lewis.
Benj'n Bussey.
Elijah Putler.
Lem'l Whiting.
Sam'l Tucker.
Simeon Tucker.
Samuel Tucker, Jr.
Benjamin Tucker.
Benjamin Silvester.
John Madden.
James Tucker.
Elisha Haws.
Elijah Wentworth.
Joseph Henry.
Stephen Blake.
James Smith.
John Morse.
Ephraim Smith.
Amos Upham.
John Dunlop.
John Gill.
Aruuah Wentworth
Joses Hill.

Henry Crane.
Nath'l Shepard.
Henry Morse, Jr.
John Tant.
John Tant, Jr.
William Wheeler.
Samuel Wheeler.
Sam'l Billing.
Joseph Billings.
John Tucker.
Nath'l Tilden.

Ephraim Jones.
Seth Wentworth.
Philip Whiting.

Adam Blackman.
Oli'r Wentworth.
Josiah Tilden.
Nath'l Wentworth
Jonathan Farrington.
John Billing.
Nath'l Whiting.
Daniel Tucker.
Adam Blackman, Jr.
Sam'l Blackman.
Nathaniel Kenney.
Jno. Blackman.
Benj'n Lewis.
George Blackman.
John Withington.
Sam. Morse, Jun'r.
Henry Morse.

Elijah Gill.
Lem'l Fisher.
Abel Wentworth.
Abel Fisher.
Comfort Hoyton.
Paul Wentworth.
Elijah Fenno.
Jacob Billings.
Stephen Billings.
Nath'l Billing.
Nathan Billing.
Peter Billing.
Judah Henry.
Oliver Shepard.
Israel Bailey.
Jona. Billing.
Dudley Bailey.
George Stone.
Daniel Billing.
Enoch Leonard.
Wm. Shepard.
Elijah Endicott.
Lemuel Smith, 2d.
Joseph Stearns.
Thomas Shepard.
Richard Gridley.
Uriah Leonard.
Calvin Crane.
Peter Thayer, Jun.
Silas Kinsley.
Oliver Downs.

At the date of this petition there were but one hundred and forty voters in the Parish, so that there were on this paper three names in excess of the entire number of legal voters.

The petition was presented to the General Court, June 11, and an order of notice thereon issued, returnable at a later day. Stoughton, in the mean time, chose a committee, consisting of Samuel Talbot, Samuel Shepard, Joseph Richards, and James Pope, to oppose the petition.

January 20, 1796, a remonstrance, signed by Lemuel Drake and one hundred and sixty-nine others, was presented in the House, being an excess of fifteen names over and above the whole number of legal voters in the Second Parish,—in fact, a few names from the First Parish were upon this Remonstrance.

On June 10, 1776, the committees of the parish, and of the town, agreed that the matter should be refered to the Hon. Seth Bullard of the Senate, and Judge Bullock of Rehoboth and Mr. Joseph Hewins of Sharon, of the House. This committee was instructed to visit the town,—hear the parties and report thereon; they spent four days here in this service, and on Sept. 3, 1796, made their report in favor of an Act of Incorporation, and on the 23d of February, in the year 1797, the town of Canton was duly incorporated.

On February 24, Thomas Crane, Esq. issued his warrant to Laban Lewis, requiring him to warn the qualified voters to meet at the meeting house in Canton, on the 6th of March following, at one of the clock, P. M., then and there to choose all such officers as towns are required by law to elect.

At a meeting held in pursuance of this warrant, Elijah Dunbar, Esq. was chosen Moderator, and Elijah Crane, Town Clerk. Elijah Crane, Dea. Benj. Tucker, and Col. Nathan Crane, Selectmen and Assessors, and Joseph Bemis, Town Treasurer.

On April 3d, the first meeting of the new town was held for the election of Governor, and Increase Sumner had thirty-nine votes, James Sullivan twenty, Edward H. Robbins ten, Moses Gill seven, and William Heath one.

May 1st. Elijah Crane, the first Representative, was elected by a unanimous vote.

On the same day there was voted:

For Highways, ...	$983 17
For salary of Rev. Zadh Howard, for 1797,	300 00

And at an adjourned meeting:

For town charges, ...	800 00
For schooling, ...	500 00

In 1798 the town voted for highways $1 000., town charges $900., schooling $500., Mr. Howard's salary $300., and also voted to clapboard the back end of the meeting house and board and clapboard the back side of the belfry, also to paint the house.

These votes, and some that follow, will sound strangely to us at this day, when the town has nothing to do with the building or repair of meeting houses or the support of the ministry, and every individual selects for his favor and support such church as best suits him, and is under no obligation to support any other. On the same page of the record from which I extract the foregoing vote, I find the registry of a certificate of a committee of the denomination of Quakers, chosen at their monthly meeting, held at Lynn, "that Jonathan Leonard of Canton, doth belong to said Society." Such certificates were then necessary in order to relieve the person from liability to taxation for Parish purposes. Many present will remember Mr. Leonard, who was engaged with Adam Kinsley in the manufacture of iron and steel, and as I well remember, was usually called "Quaker Leonard." The house in which he lived now forms a part of the Massapoag House.

In 1799, at a meeting held in December, an article was inserted in the warrant, "to see if the town will procure and set up a stove in the meeting house, for the convenience and comfort of those who attend Public Worship in the winter season," and the article was dismissed. How long the Parish continued without a stove I know not. But if the heating apparatus of the meeting houses in our day were dispensed with, I fear the attendance in winter would be very small.

In 1800, we find the town instructing their representative to petition the General Court, and use his influence, to get the fine remitted that was imposed upon the town for not sending a representative to the General Court in 1799.

In 1802, I find this entry upon the records: —

"Voted that the selectmen procure Lombard de Poplar trees at the expense of the town, and that they notify the inhabitants to assist in setting them out without expense to the town."

In this manner, doubtless, the poplar trees, so common, many years ago, were introduced.

1803. I select these passages,—April 4th: "Voted that the selectmen post notification in the Belfry, calling on Youth and others not to make a tarry in Belfry after Public Worship is begun."

This suggests a query whether the youth of that day were essentially different from what they are to-day.

Again, May 2d., "Voted that Joseph Bemis, Wm. Wheeler, Henry Bailey, Capt. Abner Crane, Benj. Lewis, and Adam Kinsley, be a committee to deliberate on the subject of Enlarging the Singers' Pew, as also, the subject of singing in general, to the end that that part of publick worship may be performed with conveniency, decency and in good order."

In 1805, this vote; "That Henry Bailey, Joseph Bemis and Jona. Leonard, be a committee to hear the aggrieved parties as respects their time and expense in search for Jack Battus, (the murderer of the young girl Talbot,) and report at April meeting." At April meeting sixteen persons were allowed, in all, $46 50 for this service.

I now propose to give you an idea of the way and manner in which they made a contract for a parish minister, seventy years ago, which may furnish valuable hints to churches and parishes at the present day.

April 6. "Voted unanimously, that the town concur with the church in giving Mr. Wm. Richey a call to the pastoral charge of said Church and Society of this town." Thereupon, a committee of twenty-five persons was chosen to confer with Mr. Richey, as to salary, &c., and report at an adjourned meeting.

One might suppose that poor Mr. Richey would have stood no chance whatever with a committee of twenty-five full grown, sharp, sagacious men. But he seems to have met the ordeal bravely, for on the 15th the committee reported that the town should grant Mr. R. $100. as a settlement, upon certain stated conditions as to length of service, &c., and pay him a salary of $575. per annum, "to be computed upon the following staple articles of life, on the 1st week of May, annually, by such committee as the town shall appoint, joined with Mr. Richey, by the Boston prices, viz: Corn, Rye, Flour, Salt-Beef & Salt-Pork, Butter, Cheese, Wool, Flax, Sole Leather, & Coffee," and then they provided that if the salary was not paid in three months after it became due, "then Mr. Richey to have interest after it becomes due till paid." "Also, that the town grant him eight cords of good, merchantable fire-wood annually, during the time he shall remain without a family, and sixteen cords annually, when he shall have a family."

It is clear that an impression soon got abroad that the parson had been too sharp for the committee of twenty-five; that question of interest to be computed on overdue salary, was uncomfortable. So, at the next meeting, so much of the foregoing vote as related to interest was erased, or expunged. But Mr. Richey, on being informed of the repeal, quietly said, in a note to the committee, that he thought he ought to receive his salary when due, and that he should expect interest to be allowed, should there be a delinquency of payment. And the town, on hearing the letter read, again voted the interest clause, in a somewhat modified form.

Another difficulty! How much should be paid in cash under the contract based upon the market price of corn, salt pork, and the other articles named in the contract. Messrs. Dunbar, Tucker and Bemis labored with this problem, for I know not how long, but they solved it at last, and reported the result,—and also the process by which they arrived at the result, as they said it might be useful thereafter, as a precedent. The result was that the cash pay for the salary of the minister for the second year of his service was reduced from $575. to $486.50. The minister appended

a certificate to the report, slightly suggestive of a sort of quiet humor, that he had reviewed the calculations made by the committee and found the result of them to correspond with the *letter* of the contract. This contract, however, did not always operate to the minister's disadvantage, for in one year, during the war of 1812, his salary amounted to nearly $900.

1808. March 7. "Voted to pay a bounty of one dollar per head or tail, for every Rattlesnake absolutely taken & killed within the town in the months of April, May & October the present year."

Practically this was very much like offering a bounty of two dollars for each snake killed, and very likely it was found to be so, for the next year, the town voted the same sum for rattlesnakes' *tails*, and cautioned the Treasurer "to guard against deception when he is applied to for such bounties."

May 2d. At the election for the choice of a representative, Mr. Bemis, who had been the representative for eight successive years, and was a candidate for re-election, was also the town clerk. His record reads thus:—"The votes being given in, sorted and counted, it appeared that Dea. Benj. Tucker had 32 votes, Joseph Bemis had 29 votes, and Andrew Capen 1 vote, and of course," says the record, "Dea. Benj. Tucker was elected."

1812. The war of 1812 now begins to be recognized in the records of the town. May 4th, Voted to make up the pay for persons volunteering to fill up the quota of 100 000 men, to $14. per month, if they go into actual service.

August 15, It was voted that such addition be made to the pay of those persons who were drafted from this town under the last requisition of the President of the U. S. as shall make their monthly pay eighteen dollars.

Sept. 12. The town voted to furnish each non-commissioned officer and soldier with sixty rounds of ball cartridges, and directed the selectmen immediately to purchase six hundred pounds of pork, two hundred pounds of beef, and eight hundred pounds of bread, for supplying the militia of the town, when called to defend their country. And also to procure covered baggage wag-

goons, to be in readiness to accompany the militia when called to the service of their country.

I have no means of giving a statement of the number of men furnished for the defence of the country in this war. The rolls are all in the custody of the United States, at Washington.

It is however apparent that the town was in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war, and could brook no opposition. It appears that in 1813, the Rev. Edward Richmond of Stoughton preached a sermon in Mr. Richey's (Ritchie's) pulpit, on Fast Day, in which it is supposed he denounced the war. The town took the matter in hand. On the 5th of April a committee of fifteen made this report: —

"Gentlemen of the town,—Your committee, appointed to take into consideration the subject of the Rev. Edward Richmond's fast day sermon have attended the duty assigned them, and do recommend that the town pass a vote expressive of their disapprobation that the Rev. Edward Richmond should hereafter be introduced into the Desk of Canton Meeting House on Lord's Days, Fast Days, Thanksgiving Days, and Lecture Days, as a teacher of Religious Morality, &c., and that the Town Clerk be directed to serve the Rev. William Richey with a copy thereof without delay. ELIJAH DUNBAR, *per order*."

The clerk certifies that the above vote was taken by yeas and nays, and it passed in the affirmative.

1816. April 1. A committee reported that they had purchased for the town Mr. Andrew Capen's farm for $2,750. This is the present town farm, which was afterwards sold and again purchased, of Mr. Elisha White, about the year 1837. Mr. Andrew Capen was the father of Nahum Capen, Esq., the able author of the "History of Democracy," and formerly postmaster of Boston.

A joke is not uncommon in our Records.

May 6, Art. 11. "To see if the town will give a bounty on crows' heads the present year.

Voted, on motion of Gen. Elijah Crane, "that every man kill his own crows."

1819. Nov. 27. In the warrant for town meeting this article was inserted on petition:

"To see if the town will express their opinion, as there are three Religious Societies within the town, whether they are willing to raise, in any case, any sum of money as a town, for ministerial purposes."

Dec. 6. On that article it was "Voted that the town of Canton do not raise any money in future, as a town, for ministerial purposes."

From the date of that vote, I think the town had no further connection with Parish affairs, thus anticipating legislation fourteen years, for the statute dissevering the parishes from the towns did not pass till April 1, 1834.

Having now culled from the town records such matter as I have thought might be of interest, down to the year 1820, I am admonished that I cannot pursue this line further.

We have seen the country emerge from a state of subjection to the British Crown, into a state of national sovereignty and independence, and have traced briefly, some of the steps by which it was accomplished.

Stoughton in 1776, was not an insignificant town. In 1765 it stood, by the Massachusetts Census, in point of population, the nineteenth in the State; the list standing in this order:—Boston, Marblehead, Dartmouth, Salem, Bridgewater, Gloucester, Ipswich, Rehoboth, Middleboro', Nantucket, Newbury, Newburyport, Springfield, Taunton, Scituate, Andover, Hingham, Braintree, Stoughton.

The population of Dorchester, the mother town, in 1776 was but 1513, while Stoughton had 2097, and Sharon, which before that date, had been set off from Stoughton, had 1261; together, then, these two towns, exceeded the population of old Dorchester by 1845 souls. In the year 1800, Dorchester had a population of 2347, Stoughton 1020, Canton 1110, and Sharon 1018.

The population of the State in 1776, was 295,080. In 1875 it had swelled up to 1,651 912.

The population of the United States in 1776, imperfectly taken,

perhaps, under the authority of the Continental Congress, was 2,389,300, and by the U. S. census of 1790, it was 3,929,214. In 1870, the last census taken, it was 38,558,371.

In 1800, there were in the United States, 3,950,547 slaves, exceeding by 21,333, the entire population of the country in 1790.

In the early days our inhabitants were, to a very great extent, located in the central and northerly parts of the town; this continued even to a comparatively recent period. Here stood the old meeting houses; the post office, the taverns, and the stores were here. A person of sixty or sixty-five years of age, may well remember when there were but twenty dwellings, or thereabouts, on the old Taunton road, between the house of Mr. Samuel Downes and the Sharon line; and but half a dozen at the Stone Factory Village. Now the southerly portion of the town contains, by far, the larger part of the population; four, of the five churches, the banks, nearly all the stores, and most of the manufactories. In this town, as everywhere else, the century now closed has witnessed the feeble commencement, as also the full development of our manufacturing industries. As already shown, it was the policy of Great Britain to discourage manufactures in the colonies. Independence gave our people their opportunity, and well have they improved it. One hundred years ago, this was, per force, an agricultural town. Now our people are devoted to manufacturing pursuits.

Col. Wright, Chief of our Labor and Statistical Bureau, has kindly favored me with some statistics of the town, from his forthcoming report, viz:

Population and Sex.

Males	1975
Females	2217
Total	4192

Polls and Voters.

Ratable Polls	999
Native voters	506
Naturalized voters	227
Total voters	733

Families and Dwelling-Houses.

Number of dwelling-houses	645
Families	859

Color and Race.

	MALES.	FEMALES.
White	1970	2209
Black	5	8

Conjugal Condition.

	MALES.	FEMALES.
Single	1202	1312
Married	728	728
Widowed	44	173
Divorced	1	4

Place of Birth.

	MALES.	FEMALES.
Born in Canton	861	906
" " other towns in Mass.	384	471
" " " States	169	214
" " foreign countries	546	613
Birthplace unknown	15	13

Manufactures and related Occupations.

Number of establishments	30	
Capital invested	$1.158 550	
Value of goods made and work done	3.085 681	
Value of stock used	1.903 679	
Persons employed	974	
	458	males.
	516	fem'es.

1865.

Number of establishments	19
Capital invested	$631,375
Value of goods made and work done	2,229 052
Value of stock used	1,540 817
Persons employed	653
Males 430,—Females 223	

The Valuation of Canton, as established by the legislature, at the last session, for the basis of State taxes, is $3,242,254 00, as assessed by the assessors in 1875, not including corporate stocks, $3,058,555 00.

Schools.

Number of scholars between the ages of five and fifteen 930. Number of schools seventeen. Number of teachers nineteen.

The resident Representatives, during the century, number in all but thirty-eight different individuals. I give their names, with the service of each, viz:

Benjamin Gill, 1776.
Thomas Crane, 1776, '77, '78, '81.
Elijah Dunbar, 1780, '82, '87, '93.
Christopher Wadsworth, 1780.
John Kenny, 1783.
Capt. James Endicott, 1784, '85, '86, '90.
Capt. Frederick Pope, 1787, '88, '89, '91, '92, '96.
Elijah Crane, 1795, '97.
Joseph Bemis, 1800, '01, '02, '03, '04, '05, '06, '07, '11, '12, '13.
Benjamin Tucker, 1808, '09, '10.
Lemuel Whiting, 1811, '12, '13.
Abel Wentworth, (senior,) 1812.
Friend Crane, 1814.
John Bailey, 1815, '16, 17.
Samuel Capen, 1819, '20, '29.
Jonathan Leonard, 1823.
Thomas French, 1824, '26, '27.

Thomas Tolman, 1828, '36.
Elijah Spare, 1830.
James Endicott, 1832, '33.
James Blackman, 1834, '35.
Michael Shaller, 1834, 35.
Nathaniel French, 1837.
Abel Wentworth, 1836, '37, '38.
Isaac Horton, 1838, '39.
John Gay, 1840, '41, 42.
John Endicott, 1843, '44.
Lyman Kinsley, 1849.
Charles Endicott, 1851, '57, 58.
Charles H. French, 1853, '54.
George Capen, 1855.
Samuel Davenport, 1856.
John S. Eldridge, 1859, '60.
Oliver S. Chapman, 1863, '64.
Joseph Leavitt, 1868.
Frank M. Ames, 1869.
James S. Shepard, 1871, '72.
Elijah A. Morse, 1876.

I have, on this occasion, neither time nor material for church, family, or individual history; that must be given hereafter, by abler pens. Fortunately, we have those who are competent for the task; Mr. Ames can tell us the age of everybody living, and all the history of such as are dead,—of the legislation of the British Parliament, and the action of the king in council with reference to the entire legislation of the Colony and Province,—of the history of the Redman Farm, and the early land titles, both of Norfolk and Plymouth.

Mr. Noyes can give us graphic descriptions of the old church and its ministers, from Morse to Savary, embracing, among others, Dunbar, Howard, Ritchie, Huntoon, and Brownson.

Mr. Huntoon will give us individual and family history,—throw further light upon the history of the church and its ministers,—tell

us of Ponkipog and the apostle Eliot,—of the famous meetings at Doty's Tavern, and everything known of the old English clergy and its last minister,—and finally, point out to us the "ancient landmarks."

With these gentlemen, and their tomes of local historic lore, there can be no excuse if Canton is not speedily provided with a complete and most valuable history.

It is useless for me to attempt to portray the progress of the century; it may be seen in almost everything and almost everywhere.

Our civilization has spread from the coasts and shores of the Atlantic, step by step, across the fertile valleys and over the magnificent prairies of the West to the golden shores of the Pacific.

Eighty thousand miles of railway traverse the country, and every city and town is within easy reach of the station and the telegraph.

We have freedom of conscience and the freedom of the Press. The equality of rights for all men, declared in the Declaration, has become an actual fact, instead of a "glittering generality."

The great War of the Rebellion came, and the nation, for nearly five years struggled for existence: but in that struggle, the gigantic institution of American slavery, holding in its grasp four millions of slaves, tottered on its old foundations and went down forever. And now, we are at peace with all the world, let us demand of the government that it be not lightly disturbed. Justice and Freedom, Peace and Prosperity, should be the national aim.

Our flag is respected by all the nations; and when, but yesterday, it was rudely assailed by fratricidal hands, a million brave men bared their breasts to its defence, and bore it aloft to triumphant victory.

Let us hope, by the blessing of Almighty God, that the Old Flag, with

"Its broad stripes and bright stars,"

may continue to be the living emblem of our United Nationality, to the latest generation.

At the close of Mr. Endicott's Address, the choir sang "The Star Spangled Banner." Then followed short, but appropriate remarks by Rev. George W. Hosmer, D. D. of Newton, Rev. William H. Savary, Hon. Charles H. French, J. Mason Everett, Elijah A. Morse, Thomas E. Bowman, Robert Draper, and Frederic Endicott, of Canton. Mr. Morse was invited by the President to speak in behalf of the legislature, and responded as follows:

The legislative form of government of the Colony of Plymouth and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was born with the compact in the cabin of the Mayflower, amidst the prayers of devout and godly men. For two hundred and fifty years the legislature of Massachusetts has been loyal to the King of Kings, true to liberty, to education, to the rights of man, did her duty nobly, spoke to the country and to the world with no uncertain sound, in the great struggle for liberty, when threatened by treason. The legislature of 1876, not degenerate sons of noble sires, but the peer of the legislature of any State, of any land, in any clime beneath the bending arches of the skies.

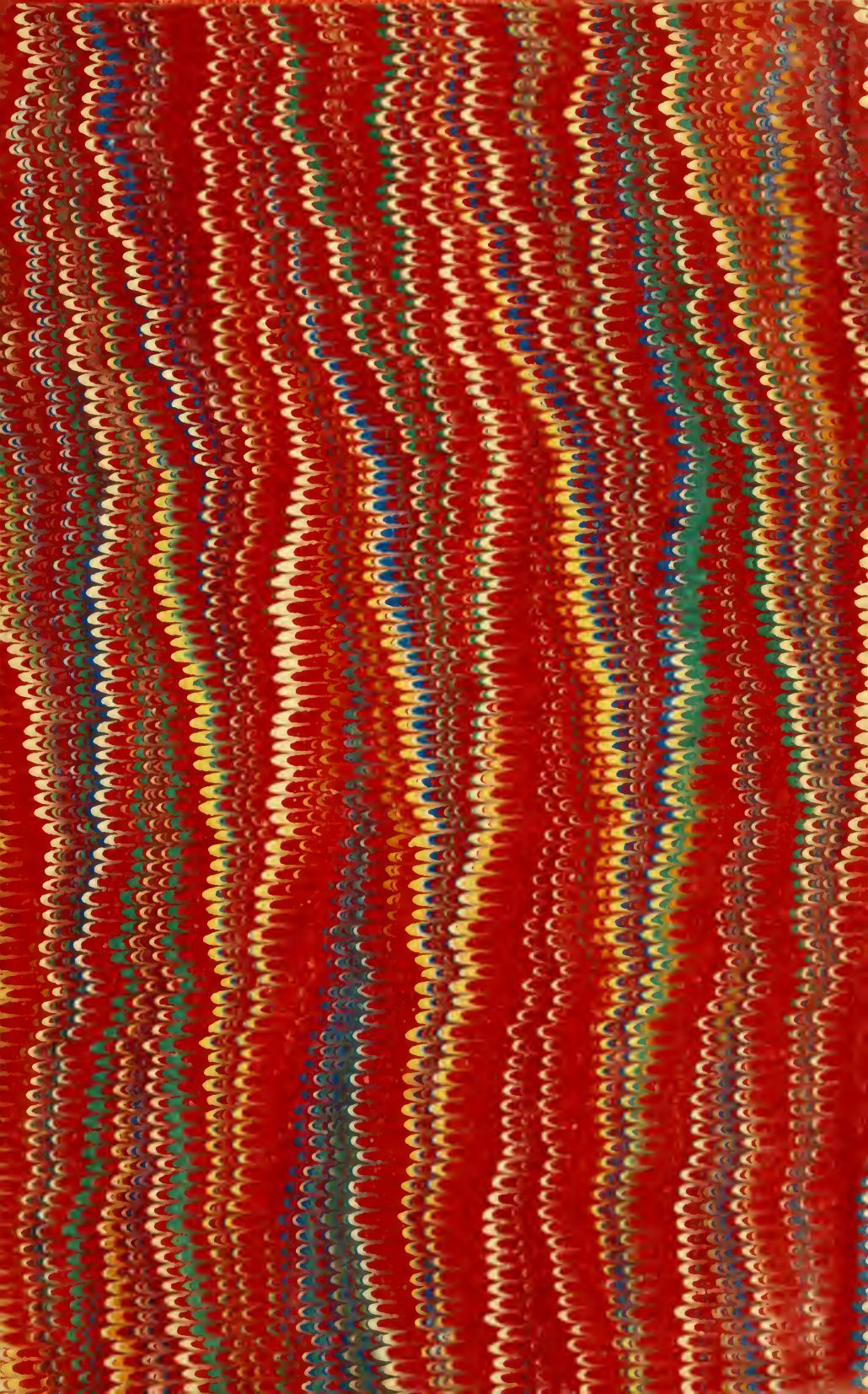
The hymn "America," was then sung, and the exercises closed with the Benediction.

The following are names of the persons, composing the choir:

Mr. Horace H. Mansfield, *Director*.

Mrs. Frank M. Ames.
Miss J. Annie Bense.
Mrs. W. Henry Bense.
Miss Eveline L. Bullard.
Mrs. Emma P. Capen.
Miss Annie I. Capen.
Mrs. Samuel Crowther.
Miss Cynthia A. Endicott.
Mrs. D. C. F. Ellis.
Mrs. James S. Shepard.
Miss Georgia A. Shepard.
Mr. Geo. Frederick Sumner.
Mr. W. Henry Bense.
Mr. Robert Draper.
Mr. Charles H. Eager.
Mr. Edward R. Hixon.
Mr. George F. H. Horton.
Mr. Richard Howard.

Mrs. Granville D. Harlow.
Mrs. Billings Hewett.
Miss Ella M. Hill.
Mrs. Alexander R. Holmes.
Mrs. Albion W. Kinsley.
Miss Helen G. Kinsley.
Mrs. William B. Shattuck.
Mr. Frank M. Howes.
Mr. Jonathan Linfield.
Mr. Luther H. Morse.
Mr. John B. Robinson.
Mr. William B. Shattuck.
Mr. Willis S. Shepard.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 013 516 1